



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

SEARCH WARRANTS ON FIVE COMPANIES UNSEALED TODAY IN OPERATION AT WAL-MART CENTER THAT NETTED 125 ALIENS *Five Subcontractors Searched for Evidence of Money Laundering & Harboring Illegal Aliens*

FRACKVILLE, PA – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today that federal search warrants and an affidavit were unsealed late this afternoon in connection with yesterday's arrest of 125 foreign nationals working illegally for five subcontracting companies on the construction site of a new Wal-Mart Distribution Center in Butler Township, Pennsylvania.

Yesterday morning, ICE agents and officials from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Social Security Administration, and the Pennsylvania State Police executed federal search warrants on trailers belonging to five subcontracting companies and/or entities performing work at the Wal-Mart construction site. These companies are Destin Drywall & Paint Inc, Frazier Drywall, Jay-Ton Concrete, CS Construction Services, and Republic Refrigeration.

The search warrants, issued by a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Middle District of Pennsylvania, sought evidence of several potential violations, including money laundering as well as harboring, transporting, and encouraging illegal aliens to reside in the United States.

During the execution of the search warrants, federal agents apprehended 125 individuals shortly after they arrived to work at the construction site. The individuals arrested worked for the five subcontracting companies searched. Agents found that some of the illegal workers had used invalid, altered or falsified documents to illegally obtain employment.

ICE agents continue to investigate the entirety of the circumstances surrounding the employment of these illegal aliens. The investigation continues.

Those arrested were from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. All of those arrested were placed into removal proceedings. They will have an opportunity to have their deportation cases heard before an impartial immigration judge.

"Employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens, and those who utilize false documents to gain employment face significant criminal and administrative charges," said John Kelleghan, Acting

Special Agent-in-Charge for ICE in Pennsylvania. “ICE’s goal is to restore integrity to the immigration system and keep our workplaces safe by ensuring that those who work there are who they say they are, and are not vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous employers.”

The operation yesterday is a part of ICE’s comprehensive strategy for worksite enforcement aimed at promoting national security, protecting critical infrastructure, and ensuring fair labor standards.

As part of this strategy, ICE agents focus on investigations involving egregious criminal employer violations and widespread abuses where ICE enforcement actions can send a strong deterrent message to other employers who knowingly employ illegal aliens. These traditional worksite enforcement cases often involve additional violations such as alien smuggling, alien harboring, document fraud, money laundering, fraud, or some form of worker exploitation.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.